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ABSTRACT

This bibliography is a list of books which have as a central theme incidents, stories, myths, legends, and poetry of the Canadian Eskimo. The age range for this bibliography is five to fourteen. No attempt is made to document literature from the Alaskan Eskimo as this has been done widely in other bibliographies. (Author/WR)

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An Annotated Bibliography of Literature By and About Canadian Eskimos for ages 5 to 14

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Preface

Native children often have difficulty reading any type of literature when they attend school. Not only do they have trouble reading in the English language, which is often a second language, but they find that the material presented is completely unrelated to their real life situation, which makes it doubly difficult for them to comprehend.

It is therefore my contention that an Eskimo child should have available to him literature which reflects his knowledge and culture. In no way should this be taken to mean that the only material in a reading program should be Eskimo oriented. In my opinion the first three years should be predominately related to his environment with a gradual transition to a more universal list of literature being presented, so that the child can relate to a broader area of experience.

The following bibliography is a list of books which have as a central theme incidents, stories, myths, legends and poetry of the Canadian Eskimo. No attempt has been made to document literature from the Alaskan Eskimo as this has been done widely in other bibliographies.

Cawston, Vee. Matuk, The Eskimo Boy. George J. McLeod 1966.

This story is about a young Eskimo boy who had to prove his courage in order to establish his role as a hunter. The drawings add to the story. A good adventure book for boys. A Glossary of Eskimo words is also included. Suitable for ages 9-12.

Eber, Dorothy. Pitseolak: Pictures Out of My Life. Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1971.

This is the autobiographical story of a famous Eskimo artist who still lives in Cape Dorset on Baffin Island. Pitseolak recounts her past using anecdotes of incidents that happened to her.

The narrative is written almost as she speaks. It gives one an appreciation for the historical past and future.

Throughout the book illustrations of Pitseolak's work help to bring her story alive. The book itself is written in both English and Eskimo Syllabics. Suitable for ages 9 and up.

Flaherty, Robert. Story of Comock The Eskimo. Edmund Carpenter, Simon & Schuster N.Y. 1968.

In 1902 Comock led his starving family across the frozen sea to an island rumoured to be rich in game. With only one small knife and a few stones for tools, the Eskimos managed not only to survive but to thrive in the frozen land. Ten years later Comock returned with his family to the mainland in a boat made of driftwood and whale bone.

This incredible true story was told to Flaherty in 1912 by Comock himself, while Flaherty was making his film "Nanook of the North". Edmund Carpenter rescued the story from among Flaherty's memoirs and published it in its present form. Suitable for ages 6 and up.

Freuchen, Pipaluk. Eskimo Boy. Burns & MacEachern, Don Mills, Ontario, 1966.

An Eskimo boy and his family find themselves left without a provider when the father is killed by a walrus. Young Ivik must become a man overnight and learn to provide for the family. His slaying of a polar bear proves to himself and to the others that he is a hunter and a provider.

Freuchen, Pipaluk. Eskimo Boy. (cont.)

This book is written by the son of one of the most famous Danish Arctic anthropologists, Peter Freuchen. Suitable for ages 11-14.

Hinds, Margery. Kanayu, The Young Hunter. Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1965.

Kanayu, a modern Eskimo boy, is depicted through various episodes as one who can take on any responsibility and carry it out completely. The reader is given some insight into modern day living of a Northern Canadian settlement.

While all of the narrative seems to be authentic, it is not a very exciting book to read, but it does contain lots of information. Suitable for ages 8-12.

Hinds, Margery. Makpa, The Story of an Eskimo-Canadian Boy. Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1971.

This is a modern day story which takes place in Arctic Bay which is situated well inside the Arctic Circle. Makpa, at the age of eleven, is given the responsibility of a man and succeeds beyond the call of duty. The story is an authentic re-creation of the life style of a modern Canadian Eskimo in an isolated location. Suitable for ages 9-14.

Houston, James A. Akavak. Longmans, Toronto, 1968.

A fourteen year old Eskimo boy sets out with his old grandfather to visit in a far away camp. On the way Akavak learns many good things from his grandfather. As the days go by on the long journey Akavak proves himself to be a worthy hunter and strives to bring his grandfather to their destination. Suitable for ages 6-14.

Houston, James A. Tikta'liktak: An Eskimo Legend. Longmans, Don Mills, Ontario, 1965.

This is a Baffin Island legend about a young Eskimo's gallant battle for survival after he is separated from his family and carried out to sea on an ice flow. The account of the boy's courage and resourcefulness during the ordeal make this a touching story long to be remembered. The author also provided the illustrations. This bock won the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians Book of the Year Medal in 1966. Suitable for ages 5-8.

Houston, James A. The White Archer: An Eskimo Legend. Longmans, Don Mills, Ontario, 1967.

A young Eskimo, Kungo, remembers the night when a raiding band of Indians killed his parents and carried off his sister. He resolves to become a great archer, and is determined to avenge his parents death. When he has his chance to kill, Kungo achieves a far greater triumph than revenge.

James Houston achieves a great dramatic impact on the subject of Indian - Eskimo relations. Suitable for ages 9-14.

Houston, James A. The White Dawn. Harcourt Brace, New York, 1971.

In 1896 a small whale boat was towed by a harpooned whale far from the mother ship. That whale boat finally found itself on the shores of an isolated Eskimo village. This story is a fictionalized account (based on fact) of what happens when six white men are placed in an Eskimo village. The story told is not a romantic one, but rather it is almost too realistic. While it is not a book for young children, it would certainly create discussion for mature readers. Suitable for ages 15 and up.

Lewis, Brian. Arctic Reading Series #12 "Eskimo Fables" Information Canada, Ottawa, 1968.

The twenty Eskimo Fables contained in this book all relate to animals such as the Caribou, Weasel, Raven, Bear, Fox, Owl and Wolverine, which are all familiar animals to Eskimo people. The stories all contain moralistic endings.

This is part of a series that was commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Suitable for ages 7-14.

Lewis, Brian. Arctic Reading Series #14 "Eskimo Legends" Information Canada, Ottawa, 1968.

The Eskimo Legends contains stories of the supernatural. It includes such titles as "The Woman Who Became a Caribou", "The Boy in the Rabbit Skins" and eighteen more stories.

This is part of a series that was commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Suitable for ages 7-14.

Lewis, Brian. Arctic Reading Series #13 "Eskimo Myths" Information Canada, Ottawa, 1968.

Eskimo Myths contains such short stories as "How the Night and Day were Created", "How the Raven Stole the Sun" and other like titles. Like all peoples the Eskimos were concerned with "creation". These stories give simple answers to the different aspects of this difficult topic.

This part of a series that was commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Suitable for ages 7-14.

Lewis, Brian. Arctic Reading Series #11. "Poems and Stories" Information Canada, Ottawa, 1968

This little book consists of poems and stories that have been written by Eskimo people for Eskimo people. All topics are related closely to the Eskimo way of life.

This is part of a series that was commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Suitable for ages 7-14.

Lewis, Richard. I Breath a New Song: Poems of the Eskimo Simon & Schuster, New York, 1971.

This book is the first attempt to collect an Anthology of Eskimo Poems since 1961. One will find poems that represent the work of the Eskimo throughout the Canadian North. The reader will find a great variety in the types of poems that are written. The drawings of Jessie Oonark, an Eskimo artist in Baker Lake, help to enhance the poems. Suitable for ages 5 and up.

Markoosie. Harpoon of the Hunter. McGill - Queens University Press, Montreal, 1970.

A young boy named Kamik achieves manhood during the hunt for a wounded polar bear, as he journeys home alone after his companions have been killed. It is often a story filled with harsh realities.

This is the first fictional story that was written in English by an Eskimo. Suggested for ages 10 and up.

The author, attracted by the tales he found in Eskimo folklore, turned them into children's stories. He has tried to gather stories which are common across the Arctic and explain in some way the origin of animals, birds, sun, stars, and even the winds. Suitable for ages 6-14.

Melzack, Ronald. Raven: Creator of the World. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, Ontario, 1970.

According to Eskimo legend, Raven was a superhuman being who could take the shape of a bird or a man. This collection of ten stories tells how Raven created the world, the animals and the people. These stories give insight into the Eskimo way of life through the world of myth. The book is well illustrated. Suitable for ages 6-14 or even older.

Metayer, Maurice. I, Nuligak. Peter Martin Associates, Toronto, 1966.

This unique volume is the autobiography of an Eskimo of the Western Arctic region. In his own words he pictures the Eskimo way of life which has now disappeared and the changes brought by the coming of the white man. The translator has added some explanation where necessary. Suitable for ages 15 and up.

Metayer, Maurice. Tales from the Igloo. Hurtigs, Edmonton, 1972.

This is a selection of tales from the Copper Eskimo of the Central Arctic. All the tales are new, in that they have not been written down before.

The colour art work of Kalvak and Nanagak from Holman Island enhance the stories that are told. Suitable for ages 10 and up.

Mowat, Farley. The Desperate People. Little Brown and Company, Toronto, 1959.

The Desperate People is the second of two books by Mowat on the Eskimo people. The first, published in 1952, was called People of the Deer.

This book deals chiefly with the Inland Eskimo around the Hudson's Bay. It is really a number of short stories based on activities of the

Eskimo people as they move from a nomadic existence to a more stationery one. Such topics as famine, cold, crimes and white man's justice as exemplified in the R.C.M.P., are examined.

This book is not written for children, but because of the very real situations, it gives an older young person some sensitive insights into the past. Suitable for ages 13 years and up.

Mowat, Farley. People of the Deer. Little Brown and Company, Toronto 1952.

Mowat has tried to recapture the day to day life of the Eskimo people as they lived before the white man. He uses an Eskimo family as a model and builds a story round their traditional way of life.

The book has a tendency to romanticize the old ways. Suitable for ages 7-14.

Rasmusson, Knud and Guy Mary-Rousseliere. Beyond the High Hills: A Book of Eskimo Poems. Nelson, Foster & Scott, Willowdale, Ontario, 1961.

This volume of pictures and poems will be of interest to readers of all ages. Although the colourful photographs do not always illustrate the particular poem, they blend to form a distinct impression of Eskimo life. Both of the authors have spent many years in the north.

Ruttan, Robert. The Adventures of Oolakuk. Prentice-Hall, Toronto, 1961.

The story of a typical 12 year old Eskimo boy in the modern setting is the topic of this book. It illustrates the everyday life of the Eskimo.

This book has a very condescending view of Eskimos. It also gives information which in some cases is totally untrue and misleading. For example, it shows Eskimos living as they did years ago and not as they do today. The author says that schools exist in only communities where white people live, which is completely false.

Schwarz, Herbert. Elik and Other Stories of the MacKenzie Eskimos. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto. 1970.

Elik is a story of the supernatural in true Eskimo tradition. It explains how goodness conquers evil. Other stories are similar to the above.

Although the first part of the book is excellent in retelling some of the Eskimo myths, the second part degenerates into the author's personal "romantic" images of northern people. His attitude is one condenscention toward the Eskimo people. Suitable for ages 10-15.

Wilkinson, Doug. Land of the Long Day. Clarke, Irwin, Toronto, 1965.

Now a modern classic, this book records the day to day life of an Eskimo family. The reader experiences the fishing, hunting and trapping expeditions of this family, and he also is made aware of their joys and sorrows. Suitable for ages 13 and up.

Wilkinson, Doug. Sons of the Arctic. Clarke, Irwin, 1965.

The author tells this fictitious story of an Eskimo father and his three sons and how their annual fishing expedition is filled with danger, joy, sorrow and humour. Although the story is a fictitious one, all of the experiences are true. Suitable for ages 13 and up.